

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON - A delegation of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) will be in Russia June 17-28 to meet with a broad range of official and nongovernmental interlocutors on xenophobia and hate crimes targeting Jews, Muslims and other minority religious groups, and the implementation of laws and regulations on religious affairs. The delegation will visit Moscow, St. Petersburg and Kazan.

The USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan federal commission that advises the President, Secretary of State, and Congress on how to promote religious freedom and related human rights around the world. It was created by the U.S. Congress in the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (IRFA). It consists of nine Commissioners appointed by the President and Congress.

As part of its annual deliberative process, the Commission assesses religious freedom conditions first hand. In the past, USCIRF has sent official delegations to Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Eritrea, Laos, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Uzbekistan and Vietnam, among other countries.

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom was created by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to monitor the status of freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief abroad, as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related international instruments, and to give independent policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State and the Congress.

- Michael Cromartie
- Felice D. Gaer